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Press Release

US Government creates 400 jobs for women in El Alto

The U.S. government, through its Agency for International Development (USAID) inaugurated today the first of two textile production centers that will create jobs for 400 women in the city of El Alto.

U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia David Greenlee, the new Director for USAID/Bolivia Michael Yates, El Alto Mayor José Luis Paredes, and Bolivian governmental authorities presided over the ceremony inaugurating the center, which will be operated by a mother's club in El Alto.

The center inaugurated today will produce garments for AMETEX, currently Bolivia's largest exporter of textile goods. This U.S. Government cooperation effort, channeled through USAID, is designed to provide women in poverty-stricken El Alto with a chance to become part of formal, productive economy in steady jobs. The new facility will provide opportunities for economic growth and development in El Alto. The women working in the centers will use their skills mainly to produce embroidered items for AMETEX. A second center is planned.

This project is an example of USAID's efforts to promote public-private partnerships in Bolivia and to support the city of El Alto's plans to generate high levels of productive employment by becoming an export center. The rationale behind this kind of effort is that higher employment rates will contribute to economic development and a culture of peace in the country.

Through its Office of Transition Initiatives, USAID is currently funding more than 900 projects in El Alto, as part of the U.S. Government's overall cooperation efforts in Bolivia, estimated at more than \$US 150 million per year. Annually, USAID manages approximately \$US 100 million of those cooperation funds in order to increase the income of underprivileged people, achieve an adequate use of forestry resources, water and biodiversity to promote sustainable economic growth, improve healthcare, support licit economic activities in coca-producing zones and related areas, and foster greater confidence of the citizenry in democratic institutions and processes.

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